The World is a Stage

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Body

While informing people during a wildlife presentation on the high extinction rate, some guests argue that what we are experiencing today is 'natural'.

Alas, there is little "natural" about climate-induced disaster. You all know the Jurassic Age, well, scientists call the interval since the Industrial Revolution the "Anthropocene," Age. This is because "our species has become the major factor altering the biological, physical and chemical properties of the planet on a geological scale. Empowered by fossil fuel-driven technologies, a rapidly growing human population and an insatiable demand for constant growth in consumption and the global economy, our species is responsible for the calamitous consequences."

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Laurel Beechey - The World is a Stage

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"We now know that the weight of water behind large dams and injecting pressurized water into the earth for fracking induce earthquakes. Clearing large swathes of forests, draining wetlands, depleting water for industrial agriculture, polluting marine and freshwater ecosystems with nitrogen, plastics and pesticides from farmland and cities, expanding urban areas and employing ecologically destructive fishing practices such as drift nets and trawling all combine to produce species extinction on a scale not seen since the mega-extinction of dinosaurs 65 million years ago." - David Suzuki.

As our earth deteriorates around us, we have affected every species of animals, plants, birds, insects, trees, reptiles, moss and even the air we breathe. One of the consequences of our warming earth is this terrifying fact: scientists just announced 60% of mammal, bird, fish and reptile populations have been wiped out since 1970! Since the last mass extinction, it is estimated we only have 1% of the animals left on earth. Can you imagine what the earth was like when all were here? We talk about our human imprint on the earth perhaps a more realist analogy would be that we are stamping out life beneath our feet.

Former Prime Minister Stephen Harper said it was impossible to act to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to avoid climate change because it would destroy the economy. That sentiment seems to be as prevalent today, even as we all complain constantly about the wildfires, superstorms, droughts, floods and weird weather.

It is greed for more money that causes this although we wrap it up in a nice title the 'global economic system.' To fix our earth we need to suck it up and realize we are going to have to change and that change to save the earth is going to drive prices up.

Everyone is railing against the carbon tax, yet Sweden imposed their tax of $35 a tonne in 1991, grew its economy by 60 per cent by 2012 while reducing emissions by 25 per cent, then raised the tax to more than $160 in 2014. It has worked to gradually force them to reduce their pollution. With our 2030 tipping points deadlines, there is no longer time to do anything gradually.

To politicians, the economy is more important than the air that provides weather and climate and enables us to live, yet if they continue to not make severe and quick changes to we will tip over the edge of one of the tipping points that are looming and send our plant into a large scale and permanent effects on our environment. Some scientists believe we have passed the tipping point for the Arctic melting ice, which will has greatly affected all life in the north, the world's weather patterns and will continue to do so.

These companies should be responsible for what they are doing and immediately clean up their destructive pollution on their own dime or our taxes, either way we will pay. They have known the problems for years and paid to ignore it. Yes, the economy will be affected. Yes, we will have to pay more for what we buy. Yes, we may not be able to have five cell phones in one family, three cars, four televisions, eat out so often, buy so many clothes and shoes, spend six months in Florida, buy stuff for fun.

We disassociate going shopping and putting fuel in our cars, to the global chaos we are creating. We must change our shopping habits and buy sustainable products, stop flattening forests for homes, stop bulldozing wetlands which are home to very threatened species and prevent floods; we must carpool or use public transport, walk, bike. We need to reduce consumption of meat and dairy products, use renewable energy, refuse to buy extra packaged items, recycle everything and compost.

Yes, we will all being paying more for what we need and have much less. But we have the chance to stop the cascade now, how much more is it going to cost when we have gone past the point of no return? As the destruction and chaos grows worse in our lifetime, but especially the next generations, how much will it cost to survive in a dying world? Our fuel, our production food, our garbage, reduction of forests, everything we do affects the destruction of the ozone layer in the air above us. What is more important, money, things, or air and survival?

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